

Amendments to the Claims

1-8. (Canceled)

9. (Previously Presented) A method for verifying an availability of a server comprising:
transmitting an availability request by a first client to the server;
the first client receiving a response to the availability request;
the first client transmitting a message regarding an availability of the server to a plurality of predefinable other clients; and
preventing transmission of any availability requests by the plurality of predefinable other clients to the server for at least a prescribable period of time.

10. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 9, wherein the method is used for verifying availability of the server in a packet-oriented communication network.

11. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 9, wherein data is transmitted between the server and the first client and the predefinable other clients by a connectionless switching control.

12. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 9, wherein the message regarding the availability of the server is transmitted by the first client to the plurality of predefinable other clients using a multicast message.

13. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 9, wherein the first client sends a message regarding an availability of the server to only the plurality of predefinable other clients within a same subnetwork.

14. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 9, wherein the first client executes the availability request at a time which is predefined by a first timer.

15. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 14, wherein the first timer is reset to a predefinable value after the response to the availability request is received by the first client.

16. (Previously Presented) A control program loaded into a random access memory of a client and having code comprising:

a first code portion configured to cause the client to transmit an availability request to a server;

a second code portion configured to cause the client to monitor for a receipt of a confirmation message responding to the availability request if the server is available; and

a third code portion configured to cause the client to transmit a message regarding an availability of the server to a plurality of predefinable other clients, the message regarding the availability of the server configured to prevent a transmission of availability requests by the predefinable other clients to the server for a predefinable period of time.

17. (Canceled)

18. (Previously Presented) A client of a communication network comprising:
a first device configured to transmit an availability request to a server;
a second device configured to monitor for receipt of a response comprising a confirmation message responding to the availability request if the server is available;
a third device configured to transmit a message regarding an availability of the server to a plurality of predefinable other clients, the message regarding the availability of the server configured to prevent a transmission of an availability request by any of the predefinable other clients to the server for a predefinable period of time if the confirmation message responding to the availability request is detected by the second device.

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 9 further comprising the first client checking to determine whether the server is at least able to respond to the availability request with an unavailability message if no confirmation message is received by the first client.

20. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9 further comprising the first client transmitting a negative ~~server~~ availability message to the predefinable other clients if the server provided an unavailability message or if the server did not respond to the availability request within a predetermined amount of time after the availability request was sent to the server.

21. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 9 further comprising the first client receiving keep alive data from the predefinable other clients.

22. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 9 further comprising one of the predefinable other clients transmitting a collective availability request to the server if no multicast collective request has been received by that client within a predefined time period.

23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 9 further comprising the first client storing keep alive data received from the predefinable other clients.

24. (Previously Presented) The client of claim 18 further comprising a fourth device configured to monitor for receipt of a message from one of the predefinable other clients regarding availability of the server.

25. (Previously Presented) The client of claim 18 further comprising a fourth device configured to store keep alive data received from the predefinable other clients.

26. (Previously Presented) The client of claim 18 wherein the message regarding the availability of the server is a negative multicast availability message if an availability message is not received from the server within a predetermined time period after the availability request is sent to the server.

27. (Previously Presented) The client of claim 18 wherein the first device is also the third device and the first device is a transmitter or a transmission mechanism.

28. (Previously Presented) The client of claim 18 wherein the first device, second device and third device are interconnected portions of the client.

29. (Previously Presented) The client of claim 18 further comprising a fourth device configured to monitor for reception of a message from a prescribable further client about server availability and also configured to prevent transmission of an availability request to the server at least for a prescribable time interval after receipt of such a message.